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Sent: Sun 2/6/2022 8:00:57 AM (UTC-05:00)
Subject: No end in sight to Ottawa protests, not enough resources, says police chief

Thanks Leslie! OPP Commissioner Tom Curry....
??? Haha!

On Feb. 6, 2022 7:40 a.m., "Jean, Leslie (OPP)" <Leslie.Jean@opp.ca> wrote:

No end in sight to Ottawa protests, not enough resources, says police chief

'This is a nationwide insurrection. This is madness,' says police board chair

[Joanne Chianello](#) · CBC News · Posted: Feb 05, 2022 10:41 PM ET | Last Updated: 8 hours ago

Ottawa's chief of police says he does not have enough resources to end the turbulent protests launched in the nation's capital more than a week ago — nor can he say when they might come to an end.

"We need an additional surge of resources," Chief Peter Sloly said Saturday, even though every available Ottawa Police Service (OPS) officer is on active duty and hundreds of other law-enforcement officials have come to help.

More than 7,000 demonstrators came into the downtown Saturday, according to police, and 500 heavy trucks still remain in the so-called "red zone."

Sloly made the statement at a rare emergency meeting of the Ottawa Police Services board, one hastily called for late afternoon and which lasted more than two hours.

Coun. Diane Deans, who chairs the board, did not mince words about how she perceives the demonstrations that have taken over the core of the city.

"This group is emboldened by the lack of enforcement by every level of government," said Deans, at one point referring to them as "terrorists."

"They are terrorizing our residents, torturing them with incessant honking, threatening them and preventing them from leading their lives. People cannot go to work or open their businesses. They cannot sleep, walk, shop, go to medical appointments or enjoy their neighbourhood," she said.

"This group is a threat to our democracy. What we're seeing is bigger than just a city of Ottawa problem. This is a nationwide insurrection. This is madness."

Police flooded with complaints

Complaints to police about everything from noise and traffic to threats and assaults have been flooding the reporting channels, to the point some people give up trying.

More than 400 calls have come in since the demonstration began, and police have launched 50 criminal investigations, including 11 related to hate crimes.

Four people have been charged in relation to those hate-crime investigations, bringing the total number of charges to seven.

They've even issued 70 traffic violations, for infractions like driving the wrong way on a one-way street.

Board members pressed upon Sloly many of the questions on the public's mind: Why aren't laws and bylaws being enforced? When will arrests be made? Why is a shack illegally built at Confederation Park not taken down yet? Why is the city-owned parking lot at the baseball stadium being used as a base camp for the protest.

"What's going to be done here?" demanded a furious Coun. Carol Anne Meehan, who sits on the board. "We're giving a signal to everyone coming into town that it's a free-for-all."

Not a reasonable crowd, says deputy

Both the police and the National Capital Commission have been criticized for not removing the hastily erected wooden shack on the NCC-controlled park.

But acting Deputy Chief Trish Ferguson said both laws and judgment have to be considered, as police believe that situation could become dangerous quickly.

In the case of the shack, police had to get permission from the NCC, which owns the property, to remove the structure. That took a little time, but then there was a claim by some protesters that it was part of an Indigenous demonstration. So police then had to consult with local Indigenous leaders to determine if that claim was valid.

Apparently it was not, but even so, Ferguson said police have to assess whether anyone might get injured if officers move in, even if they are legally in the right.

"I know everybody is looking to Confederation Park saying, 'Why don't you just go in there with bulldozers and take it down?' There were children [there], there were women," she told the board.

As for board members' suggestions that protestors be ticketed for all the infractions they're committing — idling, parking, violating noise bylaws — Ferguson said she's not sure what good it would do.

"If we're dealing with reasonable people, then it is a deterrent," she said. "But this is not the crowd that we're dealing with."

Mistakes were made, admits chief

Police have now conceded they were not expecting protesters to stay this long.

Deputy Chief Steve Bell said the intelligence coming in from security partners across the country when the convoys first set off was that they would stay a short time and leave — just like every other protest that has come to Ottawa.

According to CBC sources, the seven or eight convoy leaders in contact with police indicated most of the trucks would roll out last Sunday. That clearly didn't happen.

"This is an unprecedented situation, but we have learned from our experience and yes, our mistakes, and we're committed to doing better," said Sloly.

The chief did not elaborate on precisely what those mistakes were, but it may have included offering to hand over the parking lot of the baseball stadium to the demonstrators more than a week ago.

The idea at the time was to get the trucks out of the downtown.

But demonstrators soon organized themselves into a semi-permanent camp at the Coventry Road lot, where huge donations of food and fuel are distributed to protesters, some of whom sleep in their trucks.

Many of them eat together in large white tents. They have bonfires at night. They've even installed three working saunas.

Now, police are worried about how to move the protesters, literally invited there by city officials, without a dangerous conflict.

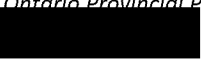
All resources on the streets, curfew suggested

The board heard that virtually every one of the 500 available OPS officers is working 12-and-14-hour shifts, with any booked time off cancelled. Sloly said some haven't had a day off in almost two weeks, a situation that cannot continue indefinitely, even though the protest does.

Ontario Provincial Police Commissioner Tom Curry has helped — "There's nothing we have asked for that he hasn't given and he's offered even more today," said the chief — as has RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki.

The federal police force has been working OPS since the demonstration began, with another 257 RCMP officers joining the local ranks to help with demonstration enforcement as of Saturday.

The board asked the chief to deliver a list "as soon as possible" of additional resources that he might need. Deans even floated the idea of asking the province to impose a curfew.

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